collapse. However, there has been a slow down in the steel industry in the recent past. The performance of the small steel plants and re-rolling mills has been affected due to various reasons including inadequate availability of power, increase in input costs, uneconomic production capacity, outdated technology and other problems related to labour, finance and management etc.

TISCO has not incurred any losses in the first 6 months of the current year. However, in the first half of the current year SAIL has incurred a loss of about Rs. 617 crores.

(b) and (c) Government is aware of the present slow down in the steel industry. The details of the steps taken by the Government and some of the results achieved to enable the steel industry to overcome the present problems are as under:—

(i) Too boost the demand and consumption of steel, the Development Commissioner for Iron & Steel (DCI&S) has launched a National Campaign.

(ii) Recently, the import duty on several inputs such as coking coal (ash content< 12%), non-coking coal, metallurgical coke, ferro nickel, charge nickel and nickel oxide sinters, low silica limestone and graphite electrodes (> 28") has been reduced.

(iii) Strengthening of anti dumpting mechanism was strongly recommended. An Anti dumping duty on Hot Rolled coils imported from Ukraine and Russia has recently been notified by the Designated Authority in the Ministry of Commerce.

(iv) Rationalisation of Duty Entitlement Pass Book (DEPB) rates for steel exports have been carried out to boost exports.

(v) A Steel Exporters' Forum has been set up to help steel exporters overcome bottlenecks in exports.

(vi) Enahanced project financing to steel sector by All Indian Financial Institutions and relaxation of ECB norm has been strongly recommended.

Heavy Losses by the VSP

888. SHRI N.R. DASARI:
SHRI GAYA SINGH:

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Visakhapatnam Steel Plant incurred heavy losses due to delay in starting the production;

(b) if so, the total amount of losses incurred so far; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken for the revival of the plant?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The total amount of loss incurred by RINL (VSP) upto 31.3.98 is Rs. 3596.65 crores.

(c) As per directions of the Govt., the company engaged an internationally reputed consultant to study the turnaround strategies and prepare a comprehensive revival plan for long term viability of the company. The consultants have since submitted their report. And a comprehensive proposal for the revival of the Plant is under consideration.

देश में इस्पात की कमी

889. श्री दिलीप सिंह जूदेव:
श्री गोपाल सिंह जी० सोलंकी:

क्या इस्पात और खान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या देश में वास्तव में इस्पात की अत्यधिक कमी है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है और इसके कारण क्या है;

(ग) इस कमी को पूरा करने के लिए सरकार द्वारा क्या कदम उठाए गए हैं, और

(घ) इस्पात के आयात एवं निर्यात का कारखाना निर्गत मूल्य, सी० आई० एफ० तथा एफ०ओ०बी० मूल्य क्या है?

इस्पात तथा खान मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री रमेश बैस): (क) जी, नहीं।

(ख) और (ग) उपर्युक्त (क) को देखते हुए प्रश्न नहीं उठता।

(घ) आयात लागत से तुलना करते समय कारखाना बाह्य मूल्य की तुलना में स्टॉकयार्ड मूल्य बेहतर सूचकांक है। अक्तूबर, 1998 में स्टील अथॉरिटी ऑफ इंडिया लि० (सेल) के स्टॉकयार्ड मूल्य, निर्देशात्मक सी०आई०एफ० मूल्य और इस्पात के कुछ मदों के आयात की उतराई तक लागत निम्नानुसार थी:—

(रुपए/टन)

क्र०सं०	मद	स्टॉकयार्ड मूल्य	सी०आई०एफ० मूल्य	आयात की उतराई की लागत
1.	तार छड़ (6 एम० एम०) आई० एस०—2062	16,917	12,782	20,838
2.	बीम (25 × 70)	16,802	16,616	27,029
3.	प्लेटें (22 एम० एम०)	22,437	19,599	31,844
4.	एच० आर० क्वायले (3.15 एम०) एम० (डी०डी० (के)	19,562	14,060	22,061
5.	सी०आर० क्वायलें (0.63 एम०) एम० (डी०डी०/के०)	24,392	17,496	28,405
6.	जी०पी०चादरें (0.63 एम० एम०)	27,232	25,990	42,163

लोहे और इस्पात का निर्यात मूल्य घरेलू और अंतर्राष्ट्रीय बाजारों में मांग, प्रचलित घरेलू और अंतर्राष्ट्रीय मूल्य, अन्य विदेशी मुद्राओं की तुलना में रुपए की विनिमय दर और निर्यात के लिए उपलब्ध प्रोत्साहन आदि जैसे अनेक घटकों पर निर्भर करता है।

Excise Duty on Steel Products

890. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the present duty and excise structure on various categories of steel and allied products are highly loaded against indigenous steel industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether his Ministry has requested the Finance Ministry to rectify the situation; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) to (d) The excise duty rate on all iron and steel items has remained at a high rate of 15% ad valorem for the last three years. The Department of Steel had requested the Ministry of Finance for rationalisation of the duty structure on iron and steel items. Some measure of relief has recently been given by Government by waiving the Special Import Duty on several inputs used by the steel sector, such as, coking coal (ash content < 12%), non-coking coal (ash content < 12%), metallurgical coke, ferro-nickel, charge nickel and nickel oxide sinters, low silica limestone and graphite electrode (> 28").